

Message Text

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EXDIS (DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS) - FOR ATHERTON FROM SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED L., JR.)

SUBJECT: ISRAELI "PARTIAL AGREEMENT APPROACH"

REFS: A) JERUSALEM 02049, B) JERUSALEM 02044

1. IT IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR TO US FROM REFTELS JUST HOW STRONGLY BEGIN FEELS ABOUT YOUR CONVEYING TO SADAT HIS (BEGIN'S) VIEWS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF CONCLUDING "PARTIAL AGREEMENTS" TO MOVE "IN STEPS." IF IT IS A CASE OF HIS SPECIFICALLY ASKING YOU TO TRANSMIT AN IDEA, WE PROBABLY HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO DO SO. WE NOTE HOWEVER THAT IN JERUSALEM 2044 YOU SAY HE "AUTHORIZED" YOU TO RAISE THE CONCEPT WITH SADAT. IF BY THAT YOU MEAN THAT HE LEFT IT UP TO YOU AND DID NOT ACTUALLY REQUEST YOUR GOOD OFFICES IN TRANSMITTING IDEA, THE MATTER WOULD BE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT AND WE WOULD PREFER THAT YOU NOT RAISE IT UNLESS

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EGYPTIANS VOLUNTEER AN INTEREST IN SOME SIMILAR PROCEDURE.

2. OUR CONCERN IS THAT SADAT AND HIS SENIOR ADVISORS MAY INTERPRET THE MERE PASSING OF BEGIN'S IDEA OF "PARTIAL AGREEMENTS" AS IMPLYING SOME SORT OF US ENDORSEMENT, OR AT LEAST THAT WE ARE SENDING MIXED SIGNALS AT THIS CRUCIAL TIME AND ARE PERHAPS BEING LED AWAY BY THE

ISRAELIS FROM OUR COMMITMENT TO A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. IF HOWEVER YOU CONSIDER THAT YOU HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO PASS BEGIN'S IDEA, OR THAT NOT DOING SO WOULD BE EMBARRASSING FOR YOU WHEN YOU NEXT RETURN TO ISRAEL, WE SUGGEST THAT YOU CONVEY IT TO SADAT MAKING CLEAR (AS PER JERUSALEM 2044) THAT IT IS AN ISRAELI IDEA WHICH WE ARE PASSING ON AT THEIR REQUEST, AND ADDING WHATEVER OTHER EXPLANATION YOU THINK NECESSARY TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING.

3. ONE WAY OF FURTHER MINIMIZING THE RISK OF MISUNDERSTANDING OCCURS TO US. YOU MIGHT DISCUSS WITH EILTS THE POSSIBILITY OF PREFACING YOUR PRESENTATION BY REMARK THAT SINCE THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF DIRECT MEETINGS BETWEEN THE ISRAELIS AND THE EGYPTIANS DURING WHICH WE WERE NOT PRESENT, WE DO NOT KNOW IF SOMETHING LIKE THIS MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED AT VIENNA OR ELSEWHERE. IN ANY CASE, WE ARE PASSING IT ON STRICTLY IN OUR POSTMAN ROLE AND HAVE NOT DISCUSSED THE IDEA WITH THE ISRAELIS OURSELVES.

4. I HAVE TALKED WITH THE SECRETARY ABOUT THE QUESTION YOU PUT IN OUR TELCON EARLIER TODAY ABOUT DISCUSSION OF OUR IDEAS WITH SADAT. THE SECRETARY DOES NOT WANT YOU TO GO FARTHER ON THIS THAN PRESENTLY AUTHORIZED. OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS THE SECRETARY WILL BE ENGAGED IN INTENSIVE SECRET

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DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT AND OTHERS ON OUR PROPOSALS, AS MENTIONED TO YOU, IN PREPARING FOR HIS UPCOMING TALKS IN CAIRO. YOU MAY EXPLAIN TO SADAT THAT THIS IS THE REASON YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO GO MORE INTO DETAIL.

5. FYI. PRESIDENT HAS DRAFT REPLY TO SADAT'S LETTER WITH HIM AT CAMP DAVID. JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW IT MAY NOT REACH YOU BEFORE SUNDAY MEETING WITH SADAT.

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